

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 1, 2009

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Madam Speaker, I regret that I missed rollcall vote Nos. 740–745. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye” on rollcall votes 740–741 and 743–745. I would have voted “nay” on rollcall vote 742.

CARLSBAD MENTAL HEALTH CLINIC

HON. HARRY TEAGUE

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 1, 2009

Mr. TEAGUE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Carlsbad Mental Health Center for their innovative use of health information technology, which was recognized in two nationally syndicated publications highlighting the findings of a report prepared by Dr. Edward Kako for the federal Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

As recently as 2007, the Carlsbad Mental Health Center was witnessing rising costs, budgetary shortages and high wait times for patient appointments and in-takes. The facility responded to these challenges by adopting an innovative new program to harness health information technology to improve efficiency and cut costs. Within a year the facility's new practices brought a number of successful developments.

First, the new practices improved the quality of care for patients, while cutting wait times for patient appointments. The new system provided the staff access to more detailed information, allowing them to better diagnose and treat patients. In addition, further research into the facilities high no-show and cancellation rates produced new policy changes, which reduced the wait time for an appointment from up to 6 weeks to an average of 11 days.

Second, these new practices resulted in dramatic cost reductions. The innovative use of health information technology by the Carlsbad Mental Health Center illustrates how adopting cutting edge technologies and practices can cut health care costs and provide better service to patients. Adopting the best practices for mental health care will not only help the general public, but will also help our veterans who are experiencing high rates of mental health disorders and substance addictions. This is of particular importance to me as I believe providing veterans with the best possible care available is among our highest obligations.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in recognizing and in honoring the Carlsbad Mental Health Center's impressive accomplishments and innovations in the field of mental health treatment.

ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP WITH PAKISTAN ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 30, 2009

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 1707, an act to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2010 through 2014 to promote an enhanced strategic partnership with Pakistan and its people. S. 1707 establishes a new, more positive framework for U.S.-Pakistan relations. This bill is a bipartisan, bicameral compromise and is crucial to the success of a wide range of U.S. national security and foreign policy interests, while ensuring accountability and accountability for the assistance we give. I was an original cosponsor of H.R. 1886, an earlier version of this legislation. H.R. 1886, was passed by this body with bipartisan support on June 12th, and I remain unwavering in my support for this assistance package to Pakistan.

Like its predecessor, S. 1707 establishes a set of principles that should govern the U.S.-Pakistan relationship, including the actions that the two countries should take to maintain a robust, relevant and lasting relationship. The bill is comprised of three titles.

The first title provides Democratic, Economic and Development Assistance for Pakistan; the second Title provides Security Assistance for Pakistan; and the third Title requires the President to develop a regional security strategy; provides for enhanced monitoring, evaluation, and auditing of U.S. assistance; requires a Presidential report on Pakistan, including an evaluation on Pakistan's progress in counterterrorism and an assessment of whether assistance provided to Pakistan is in any way facilitating the expansion of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program; and requires that all assistance to Pakistan be provided through a civilian government in Pakistan established by free and fair elections.

Pakistan is a critical ally of the United States. For too long, however, our relationship with Pakistan has been one of fits and starts, depending on events in the region and who happens to be in power in Pakistan. It is time for us the United States to forge a truly strategic partnership with Pakistan, one that goes beyond our mutual interest today in counterinsurgency and counterterrorism and speaks to the everyday needs of the average Pakistani.

S. 1707 accomplishes these objectives. The legislation would significantly expand economic, social and democracy assistance to help lay the foundation for a stronger, more stable Pakistan. As requested by President Obama, this legislation triples the authorization for U.S. economic, social, and democratic development assistance to Pakistan to \$1.5 billion a year. This assistance promotes democratic institutions in the short term. In the short term, it provides immediate funding for democratic institutions such as Pakistan's parliament and judicial institutions. For the long term, this legislation enables Pakistan's next generation by funding educational and vocational opportunities for women and girls and religious minorities.

As much as we must focus on the internal conflicts in Pakistan, we must not forget the

external issues affecting the region as a whole and the need for stabilization.

Over the years, U.S. assistance to Pakistan has fluctuated with political events, sending mixed messages and leading most Pakistanis to question both our intentions and our staying power. Today, many Pakistanis believe the United States will cut and run when it serves our purpose, a belief which undermines our longterm efforts to defeat extremists, foster democratic change, and support transparent and accountable institutions that promote security and stability in Pakistan.

However, the status quo is not working: many in the United States believe we are paying too much and getting too little—and most Pakistanis believe exactly the opposite. Without changing this baseline, there is little likelihood of drying up popular tolerance for anti-U.S. terrorist groups or persuading Pakistani leaders to devote the political capital necessary to deny such groups sanctuary and covert material support.

The bill helps bridge a sustainable U.S.-Pakistan partnership through an increased focus on public diplomacy and engagement. S. 1707 authorizes a new exchange program for Pakistani civil servants and military officers in order to foster greater respect for and understanding of the principle of civilian rule in Pakistan's military. By building bridges to Pakistan and its people, the legislation is intended to provide a new, more positive framework for U.S.-Pakistan relations. Finally, the bill authorizes an extensive increase in military assistance to help Pakistan wage an effective counterinsurgency campaign against those forces that threaten Pakistan's national security.

This legislation establishes a new, more positive framework for U.S.-Pakistan relations. The legislation establishes a set of principles that should govern the U.S.-Pakistan relationship, including the actions that the two countries should take to maintain a robust, relevant and lasting relationship.

Although, I believe that this bill is crucial and will be effective, it is only one piece of a greater strategy. This bill did not, as I have proposed, create a militant rehabilitation program to specifically prevent youth from turning to militancy from the onset. Financial support and job opportunities would be provided to graduates of the rehabilitation programs as incentives for steering insurgents away from militancy. This amendment would have greatly fostered counterterrorism efforts, and I hope that some of the many outstanding groups working in Pakistan will take the initiative in implementing this proposal.

I have been to Pakistan many times. My belief in this country and its relationship with the United States drove me to co-chair the Pakistan Caucus.

Benazir Bhutto, shortly before her death said that “The next few months are critical to Pakistan's future direction as a democratic state committed to promoting peace, fighting terrorism and working for social justice. Democracy is necessary to peace and to undermining the forces of terrorism.” I had the pleasure of knowing the late Benazir Bhutto and losing her was truly a tragedy felt beyond Pakistan. She made this statement over two years ago, yet is relevant today more than ever.

On May 19, 2009, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced \$110 million in emergency

assistance for the South Asia nation of Pakistan, including aid for civilians fleeing a military offensive against Taliban militants in the northwest. The United Nations refugee agency issued a report stating that more than 1.4 million people in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) have been registered as displaced since May 2, describing the flood as the largest and swiftest to take place anywhere in the world in recent years.

The newly-registered internally displaced persons (IDP) took the total number of those who have fled their homes in the SWAT valley and surrounding areas to two million.

I am hopeful that the \$110 million in emergency assistance will get to the people on the ground and will be of assistance to them. It is important that the people of Pakistan see that the aid is coming from America to give a face to this aid. It is essential to global security and the security of the United States.

The surge of IDPs followed the launch of a military offensive in late April. President Asif Ali Zardari acted after U.S. officials stepped up warnings that Islamabad's willingness to tolerate and negotiate peace deals with the militants was endangering both Pakistan and the wider region. The Taliban fighting spread to NWFP districts and SWAT.

President Obama's new approach to Pakistan is different than anything that has been tried before. America has expressed that it will support the democratically-elected government and it will have a clear and transparent relationship. This bill has the support of the President, Secretary Clinton, Secretary Gates, Admiral Mullen, and Senators KERRY and LUGAR.

In conclusion, I urge you to support S. 1707, which seeks to and effectively establishes a new, more positive and enduring framework for U.S.-Pakistan relations. This legislation is timely. It is bipartisan. It is accountable. It is effective.

SIXTH ANNUAL NATIONAL CYBER SECURITY AWARENESS MONTH

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 1, 2009

Ms. CLARKE. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the sixth annual National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, which kicks off today.

The goal of National Cyber Security Awareness Month is to show everyday Internet users that by taking simple steps, they can safeguard themselves from the latest online threats and respond to potential cyber crime incidents.

I commend the National Cyber Security Division (NCSD) of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA), the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC) and their partners for sponsoring National Cyber Security Awareness Month again this year.

This year, the theme of National Cyber Security Awareness Month is "Our Shared Responsibility." Ultimately, our cyber infrastructure is only as strong as the weakest link. In this digital age, we are all connected. No individual, business, or government entity is solely responsible for cyber security. Everyone must make sure to employ safe and secure computing practices. We all need to understand

how our individual online computing practices have a collective impact on our nation's cyber security.

Cyber security vulnerabilities can significantly impact our national and economic security. Cyber warfare and cyber crime are increasing in sophistication and frequency every day. The Department of Homeland Security logged 5,499 such cyber attack incidents in 2008—a 40 percent increase over the previous year. A 2007 Government Accountability Office report estimates the total U.S. business losses due to cyberattacks exceed \$117.5 billion per year. A 2009 Consumer Reports study found that over the past 2 years, one in five online consumers has been a victim of cyber crime. Attacks on our Federal Government networks this summer served as a recent reminder that we must remain vigilant in combating cyber incidents.

Through the help of the Obama administration, cyber security is finally gaining the much needed attention it deserves both in the Federal Government and the private sector. The White House's Cyberspace Policy Review, published this May, recommends that the government initiate a national public awareness and education campaign to promote cyber security. The President will soon name a National Cyber Security Coordinator, the first such White House post.

As chairwoman of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity and Science and Technology, I am doing my part to oversee government's role in securing cyberspace. Earlier this year I held a series of hearings on our Nation's cyber security posture and the various vulnerabilities in our critical information infrastructure. This month I will host a series of events geared to educate Hill staff on this important national and economic security issue.

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

HON. PHIL HARE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 1, 2009

Mr. HARE. Madam Speaker, I proudly rise today in observance of Hispanic Heritage Month to honor the culture, traditions and contributions of the Hispanic community both in my home state of Illinois and in the country as a whole.

What began as Hispanic Heritage Week in 1968 under President Johnson was expanded in 1988 when Illinois Senator Paul Simon introduced legislation to lengthen the celebration to National Hispanic Heritage Month. Beginning each year on September 15, Hispanic Heritage Month falls during the independence anniversaries of several Latin American countries, and celebrates those Americans whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America.

Today, Hispanic Americans are the largest minority group within the United States. And throughout our history, the Hispanic community has made invaluable contributions to our history and national character in the areas of government and politics, science, business, and the arts.

Of the 500 largest Hispanic-owned businesses, twenty are located in Illinois, including

Group O, Inc. located in my district in the Village of Milan. I would also like to commend the President for appointing and the Senate for confirming the newest addition to the U.S. Supreme Court, Associate Justice Sonia Sotomayor, whose life story exemplifies the American Dream: that with courage, determination and hard work, anyone can prosper and achieve success.

Furthermore, Hispanic Americans have made significant contributions to the defense of this nation through service in all branches of the Armed Forces. Hispanics have courageously defended the United States in wars from the American Revolution through the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. To date, forty-three Hispanic Americans have received the Congressional Medal of Honor, the nation's highest award for valor in action against an enemy force.

In Silvis, Illinois there is a block-and-a-half-long street with twenty-five homes that was originally settled by Mexican immigrants in the earlier part of the twentieth century. This street, appropriately renamed Hero Street USA, has, sent more than 110 men and women to serve in the U.S. armed forces, more than any other American street of comparable size anywhere in our country. Their unselfish defense of this nation and its values is representative of the strength, hard work and love of family and country demonstrated by the Hispanic community in the United States.

Additionally, I am proud to have Joe Terronez among my constituency, who in 1967 was elected to the city council in Silvis and later became Illinois's first Hispanic mayor.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to continue this national celebration which was first started by the 100th Congress and join me in honoring the histories, cultures and contributions of Hispanic Americans during Hispanic Heritage Month.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2010

SPEECH OF

HON. HARRY TEAGUE

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 25, 2009

Mr. TEAGUE. Madam Speaker, I am very disappointed that the leadership of this House has put us in the unfortunate position of voting on legislation that combines the Legislative Branch Appropriations bill and the Continuing Resolution.

First, I am against this Legislative Branch Appropriations bill. I am against Congress increasing its own budget while small businesses around the country tighten their belts. Companies in my district are cutting hours and cutting costs. Workers are losing their jobs. But Congress is paying its staff \$74 million more than last year. We have our priorities backward. I voted against the Legislative Branch Appropriations bill when it came up in the House, and I have no interest in supporting the conference report.

Second, I oppose this corruption of the legislative process. My colleagues and I should